

REYNOLDS RANCH  
COUNTY ROUTE 27  
DOLORES VICINITY  
MONTEZUMA COUNTY  
COLORADO

HABS No. CO-37

HABS  
COLA.  
42-DOLORES,  
2--

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
NATIONAL ARCHITECTURAL and ENGINEERING RECORD  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20243

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

REYNOLDS PLACE

HABS No. CO-37

HABS  
COLO,  
42-DOL.  
3-

Location: 1.6 miles north of Highway 184 on County Road 27, Dolores, Colorado.

Present Owner: Bureau of Reclamation

Present Use: Vacant

Significance: The Reynolds Ranch reflects the subsistence level homesteading that took place within the Lower Dolores Valley in the 1930's. Simple in design, the house was constructed in 1934 by Leslie Reynolds who settled the land in anticipation of his retirement from the nearby McPhee lumber town.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1934 (interview with Lloyd Reynolds, July 21, 1981).
2. Architect: None
3. Original and subsequent owners: References to the chain of title to the land upon which the structure stands are in the Office of the Recorder of Deeds, Montezuma County Courthouse, Cortez, Colorado.  
  
1938 - Patent, May 25, 1938, recorded in Book 500, page 274. U. S. Government to Leslie Reynolds.
4. Builders: Leslie and Lloyd Reynolds
5. Original plans and construction: No plans exist; wood frame.
6. Alterations and additions: None

B. Historical Context:

Leslie Reynolds and his son, Lloyd, homesteaded the land in 1933 and shortly thereafter constructed the house. The lumber used in construction of the house was given to Reynolds in lieu of back wages from the nearby lumber town of McPhee.

Reynolds and his family arrived in McPhee in 1925 from Manassas, Colorado, where he ran a general store and later a freight wagon service. Employed first at McPhee as a log scaler, Reynolds was a watchman when he retired.

Although Reynolds designed his ranch as a retirement home, it exemplifies the subsistence level of ranchers homesteading during the years of the "Great Depression." In order to exact a living from his 40 acres of hilly, marginal land, Reynolds diversified his crops, growing potatoes, vegetables, and berries, and raising goats, chickens, and rabbits. Reynolds began selling the offspring of his six-goat herd during World War II to the Mexican population of McPhee, not only because goat was a common meat of their diet, but because no ration coupons were needed.

## PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

### A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This small frame structure with log cabin siding is an example of very modest ranch quarters.
2. Condition of Fabric: Poor

### B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all Dimensions: This three-bay front, one-story with cellar house is rectangular and approximately 15 feet by 29 feet.
2. Foundation: Rubblework stone with clay mortar.
3. Wall construction, finish, color: Wooden shiplap, log siding with notched ends has been stained but now almost entirely weathered off. Cellar walls are red-tan sandstone and extend out from each side on the east facade in buttress-like retaining walls approximately five feet. Approximately one-half of the north cellar wall has caved in. Earth has been filled in between the exterior siding and interior boarding for insulation.
4. Structural system, framing: Wooden frame structure. Earth has been filled in between the ceiling joists for insulation.
5. Chimneys: There is evidence there were two metal flues through the roof near the center of the building along the ridge.
6. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and doors: There is a doorway on the north facade of the house near the center of the eastern half of the facade. The doorway has wooden surrounds, wooden sill and threshold, and a wooden door with five double-raised, horizontal panels. The door has mortise-and tenon joints with wooden dowels. A doorway on the

south facade of the house near the center of the west half has a fragment of a door, wooden surrounds, and wooden threshold. The wooden door fragment has mortise-and-tenon joints with wooden dowels and horizontal panels. A doorway in the center of the east facade has wooden surrounds, wooden sill and threshold, and a wooden door with five flat horizontal panels. The doorway to the cellar is in the center of the east facade and has wooden surrounds, threshold and sill. The deeply recessed interior jamb has an inner door. The wooden exterior batten door has a diagonal brace. The inner door is a wooden batten, bi-folding type.

- b. Windows and shutters: There is evidence that the wooden windows were single-hung sash with wooden surrounds and sills. A removable wooden sash window in the center of the west facade has wooden surrounds and sill. A window on the west facade in the gable end opens into the attic and has a wooden, four-light fixed sash, wooden surrounds and sill. All the windows have been removed.

7. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: The gable roof has fragments of roll asphalt roofing and is patched with corrugated sheet metal.
- b. Cornice, eaves: There is a simple wooden boxed cornice and overhanging eave with wooden rake on the gable ends.
- c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: There is a short metal-framed tower on the east gable end with evidence of it having been a wind charger (generator).

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

- a. Cellar: The cellar, with its earthen floor, is banked against the slope under the eastern half of the house. It has two rows of wooden posts in the center with a wooden rack suspended between the posts. There are two coal bins along the north wall.
- b. First floor: The entrance to the main floor is on the north facade and opens into a room the width of the house. There is a window approximately opposite the door on the south wall. Along the south wall is a doorway in the center to the exterior with a window flanking it on each side. A doorway in the northwest corner leads into a kitchen. The kitchen has a window near the center of the north wall and a high window in the center of the west wall. There is a doorway to the exterior near the center of the south wall.

2. Flooring: Wide wooden boards, partly covered with linoleum.
3. Walls and ceiling finish: Walls and ceilings are wide, wooden, horizontal boards with some remnants of canvas and wallpaper.

Walls in the cellar are stone, and the ceiling has shiplapped, log siding, covered partly with cardboard.

4. Decorative features and trim: Wooden baseboards.
5. Mechanical equipment:
  - a. Heating: Wood or coal-burning heaters.
  - b. Lighting: Single porcelain light socket.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The house, facing east, sits above the irrigation canal on the down slope of a ridge. It is built into the east face of the ridge approximately 15 yards from the canal. Access to the site is by a trail from the road and across a wooden foot-bridge over the canal. Along the west edge of the canal in front of the house there are a large Russian olive tree and three lilac bushes. Approximately 30 yards to the north and 20 yards to the south there are remnants of a wooden picket fence extending in an east-west direction from a shed behind the house toward the canal. The yard is covered with sagebrush, native grasses, and weeds. The site rises up to a ridge behind the house and has numerous piñon pine and Utah juniper trees.
2. Outbuildings:
  - a. Goat shed: Approximately 20 feet to the west of the house is a wooden-frame, shed-roofed building. One half of the building on the north has collapsed. The west wall of the building has vertical wooden board siding, and the south wall has corrugated metal siding. The picket fence extends along the west wall inside the building. The roof is covered with corrugated metal siding. The east facade has wooden posts and wire netting extending between some posts. There is an earthen floor. The overall building is in poor condition.
  - b. Outhouse: The rectangular wooden framed outhouse is approximately 15 yards south of the goat shed. The wall covering has been removed except for a very small segment. The wooden log cabin siding matches that on the house. The 6 wooden posts standing support a gable roof that has all the covering missing. There is a wooden floor and a wooden seat with two holes.

- c. Shed: Approximately 30 yards to the south of the outhouse is a log shed in very poor condition. The east wall has collapsed. The square wooden logs are hand-hewn, chinked with red clay. The shed roof is covered with corrugated sheet metal. The one room has an earthen floor. There is a batten door on the south wall and a window on the collapsed east wall.

### PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. Original Architectural Drawings: None
- B. Early Views: None
- C. Interviews: Reynolds, Lloyd. Interview 21 July 1981, transcript in Bureau of Reclamation, Dolores Archeological Program Files, Cortez, Colorado.
- D. Bibliography: See above.
- E. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated: None
- F. Supplemental Material: None

Prepared by: John White  
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HABS, National Park Service  
July 1981

### PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) of the National Park Service's National Architectural and Engineering Record, Rocky Mountain Regional Office, in cooperation with the Salt Lake City Region Bureau of Reclamation. Under the direction of Katherine Cole, Chief, Division of Cultural Resources, this project was completed during the summer of 1981 at the Historic American Buildings Survey Field Office, Cortez, Colorado, by John P. White, Project Supervisor (Associate Professor of Architecture, Texas Tech University); Steven M. Wiesenthal, Project Foreman (University of Maryland); Project Historians Linda Dishman (University of California at Davis), Maureen L. Gerhold (Pennsylvania State University), and Lisa B. Mausolf (Wellesley College); Architects Debra J. Brown (Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University); David J. Insinga (Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University); and Student Architect Deborah Rehn Hurst (Washington University, St. Louis).